

REMARKS

Claims 3 and 6 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 are the claims currently pending in the Application.

Claims 1 and 4 are amended to clarify features recited thereby.

Formal Matters

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statements of August 7, 2003, October 9, 2003, and March 4, 2004.

However, the Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge review and consideration of the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statements filed on February 3, 2005 and April 27, 2005.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being obvious from Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Yagi et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,036,084. This rejection is traversed.

Yagi discloses screen printing and chip mounting using a dry air atmosphere (Yagi, Abstract), such that both printing of the paste solder and chip mounting are carried out in a dry air atmosphere (Yagi, column 1, lines 62-66), and such that a humidifier 22 removes moisture from the air, preferably providing a humidity of the air reduced to a level of 20% or less (Yagi, column 4, lines 30-36) inside the enclosure which forms a treating space S (Yagi, column 3, line 66-column 4 line 5).

AAPA and Yagi, even take any combination as a whole, do not disclose or suggest that the atmosphere mainly comprise a nitrogen gas, as required by independent claims 1 and 4. The Examiner does not explain how the cited art discloses an atmosphere mainly comprise a nitrogen gas.

Further, since AAPA and do not disclose or suggest this feature, AAPA and Yagi, are incapable of disclosing or suggesting that such an moisture contained in the atmosphere be maintained at (or less than) a predetermined value, as further required by independent claims 1 and 4.

Claims 2 and 5 depend from independent claims 1 and 4, respectively, and thus incorporate novel and nonobvious features thereof. Accordingly, claims 2 and 5 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art for at least the reasons that independent claims 1 and 4 are patentably distinguishable over the prior art. Therefore, this rejection should now be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it is respectfully submitted that this Application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicant's undersigned attorney would be advantageous to the disposition of this Application, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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